

## Juvenile Court

### What does the Juvenile Court do?

The Juvenile Court has exclusive jurisdiction over youth, up to 18 years of age, who violate any federal, state or municipal law, and any youth who is abused, neglected or dependent. It also has jurisdiction over habitual truants, runaways and ungovernable youth if efforts by other social service agencies are not successful.

The court has the power to:

- Place youth in the custody of the state of Utah.
- Determine support and visitation in some circumstances.
- Terminate parental rights.
- Authorize or require services for children with disabilities and/or mental illness.
- Place youth under the supervision of the court's probation department.

### How does a child come into contact with the Juvenile Court?

There are two ways youth come before a Juvenile Court; if they violate the law or if they are victims of abuse and/or neglect.

#### Youth Who Violate the Law (Delinquent)

Alleged offenses are generally first reported to the Juvenile Court by the police, but can also be reported by schools and parents. At the court, cases are assigned to an intake officer who meets with both the juvenile and his or her parents to determine what action is necessary.



If the school reports a crime committed by a student with a disability defined under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the school must ensure that copies of special education and disciplinary records of the student are transmitted for consideration by the authorities to whom the crime is reported, as permitted by Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

#### Youth Who are Victims of Abuse/Neglect/Dependency

An incident of abuse, neglect, or dependence is reported to law enforcement or DCFS, which investigates and determines whether the incident should be reported to juvenile court.



An **abused** youth is one who has suffered or been threatened with non-accidental physical or mental harm, sexual exploitation, or is at a substantial risk of such injury.



A **neglected** youth is one who has been abandoned, mistreated, or abused by a parent, guardian, or custodian or who is at risk of such harm.



A **dependent** youth is one who is without proper care through no fault of the parent or guardian.

### When are court review hearings and what educational information does the court need?

Court hearings for both DCFS and JJS are generally held **every six to nine months** or as frequently as the judge feels is necessary.

At each hearing, the caseworker reports on the needs, status, and progress of the youth's education in order to assist the judge in making an assessment of the youth's educational attainment. The information provided regarding the youth's education will also assist the judge to make appropriate court orders regarding the youth's education.



When requested, the following information should be provided to the court:

- Current school placement and duration of the current placement,
- Educational history.
- Current grades and attendance, including GPA and credits earned.
- The youth's behavior in school.
- Whether the youth is on grade level and, if appropriate, progress toward graduation.
- Participation in Youth In Custody services.
- If the youth qualifies for and/or is participating in special education services or other specialized educational programs.
- Current IEP and IEP progress reports.
- Extracurricular involvement.
- Successes of the youth in school.
- Credit deficiencies/progress, and academic performance.